

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A photolithographic reduction projection catadioptric objective with a beam path, comprising: a first optical group including an even number of at least six mirrors; and a second at least substantially dioptric optical group more imageward than said first optical group including a number of lenses, and wherein said first optical group provides compensative axial colour correction for said second optical group, wherein a virtual image is formed by the ~~entire~~ first optical group physically on the object side of a sixth mirror and optically further along the optical beam path after said ~~behind a sixth~~ mirror.
2. (Original) The objective of Claim 1, wherein said image is formed with a numerical aperture of at least substantially 0.65.
3. (Canceled)
4. (Previously Presented) The objective of Claim 1, wherein said at least four mirrors of said first optical group include a convex mirror arranged most imageward in the beam path of the objective, and wherein said second optical group receives a beam from said convex mirror.
5. (Previously Presented) The objective of Claim 1, wherein optical surfaces of each minor of said objective are at least sections of surfaces of revolution each having a common axis of symmetry.

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12. (Previously Presented) The objective of Claim 9, wherein said second optical group is configured for independent compensative lateral color correction.
13. (Previously Presented) A photolithographic reduction projection catadioptric objective, comprising: a first optical group including an even number of at least six mirrors; and a second at least substantially dioptric optical group more imageward than said first optical group including a number of lenses for providing image reduction, wherein a third mirror and a fourth mirror are disposed optically after a first mirror and a second mirror but are physically disposed between the first mirror and the second mirror.
14. (Original) The objective of Claim 11, wherein said image is formed with a numerical aperture of at least substantially 0.65.
15. (Canceled)

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24. (Previously Presented) The objective of Claim 11, comprising in sequence, in an optical direction from an object side of said objective before said first optical group to an image side of said objective after said second optical group, a first catadioptric sub group for producing a real intermediate image, a second sub group including catoptric components for producing a virtual image, and said second at least substantially dioptric group for producing a real image.
25. (Previously Presented) The objective of Claim 11, comprising in sequence, in an optical direction from an object side of said objective before said first optical group to an image side of said objective after said second optical group, a first field lens sub group, a second catadioptric sub group comprising one or more negative lenses and a concave mirror, generating axial chromatic aberration, a third sub group including an odd number of catoptric components, and a fourth positive lens group.
26. (Previously Presented) The objective of Claim 11, wherein said second optical group comprises a plurality of lenses, wherein a diameter of a beam incident upon each of said plurality of lenses is at least half of a diameter of said each lens.
27. (Original) The objective of Claim 11, wherein said objective is doubly telecentric.
28. (Previously Presented) The objective of Claim 11, wherein optical paths of projected rays are redirected at each lens element

29. (Original) The objective of Claim 11, wherein said image is formed with a numerical aperture of at least substantially 0.70.
30. (Original) The objective of Claims 11, wherein said image is formed with a numerical aperture of at least substantially 0.75.